(b) The STC imports edible oils on CIF basis.

Drought situation in the country

383. KUMARI SUSHILA TIRIA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the States which have over come the ill effects of drought and the States which are still reeling under the adverse impact of drought; and

(b) the remedial measures taken by Government to minimise the drought effects in the drought prone States?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND COOPERATION IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHYAM LAL YADAV): (a) 34 out of 35 Meteorological Sub-Divisions have received normal or excess rainfall during the current South-West Monsoon till 20th July, 1988. All the States, which were affected by drought of 1987 have received excess or normal rainfall during this period.

(b) Question does not arise.

Mining in deep sea

384. KUMARI SUSHILA TIRIA: Will the Minister of STEEL AND MINES be pleased to state whether there is a plan to undertake mining in deep sea by the year 2005; if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL AND MINES (SHRI MAKHAN LAL FOTEDAR): A plan of action has been drawn up for Polymetallic Nodules programme to commission a semi-commercial plant by 1997. All the components of the programme including survey and exploration, mining, processing, transportation and marketing are likely to become operational on a commercial scale by the year 2008-09. However, R & D work on study of environmental parameters on mining is being carried out. A decision to set up the semi-commercial plant for processing and mining would be taken only when the techno-economic feasibility study is completed by 1992.

Central assistance to small and marginal farmers

385. KUMARI SUSHILA TIRIA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the amount spent so far under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme of assistance to small and marginal farmers for increasing agricultural production, State-wise;

(b) the number of farmers benefited under the scheme State-wise; and

(c) the target fixed for 1988-89 and the remaining period of the 7th Plan separately, particularly for Orissa?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND COOPERATION IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHYAM LAL YADAV): (a) A sum of about Rs. 42984.25 lakhs has so far been released as Central share by Government of India for the implementation of Centrally Sponsored Scheme of Assistance to Small and Marginal Farmers for Increasing Agricultural Production to all the States/Union Territories since its inception in 1983-84. Out of which the States/Union Territories have reported that they have utilised a sum of about Rs. 33588.10 lakhs upto 1987-88. A statement indicating Central funds released and utilised by the States/UTs is given. (See Statement-I below).

(b) About 227.25 lakh small and marginal farmers have been benefited so far under the scheme since its inception. A Statement indicating State-wise number of farmers benefited is given. (See Statement II below).

(c) Under the scheme an annual outlay of Rs. 5.00 lakh per block has been envisaged and is to be utilised in the following manner: